

The Beacon!

New Life Presbyterian Church 326 Raymaley Road, Harrison City, PA 15636--November, 2008



Humor

A little boy was attending his first wedding. After the service, his cousin asked him, 'How many women can a man marry?' 'Sixteen,' the boy responded. His cousin was amazed that he had an answer so quickly. 'How do you know that?' 'Easy,' the little boy said. 'All you have to do is add it up, like the pastor said, 4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer.'

After a church service on Sunday morning, a young boy suddenly announced to his mother, 'Mom, I've decided to become a minister when I grow up.' 'That's okay with us, but what made you decide that?' 'Well,' said the little boy, 'I have to go to church on Sunday anyway, and I figure it will be more fun to stand up and yell, than to sit and listen.'

Observing Thanksgiving

When Bob was growing up his Uncle butchered hogs on Thanksgiving Day. Butchering day involved a gathering of the family and a big meal but also a lot of hard work. This is not unlike our present celebration minus some of the hard work. Later in his family Thanksgiving day became a time of feasting and socializing. After Bob and I were married it involved a church service either on Wednesday evening or Thursday morning.

Tradition holds that the first Thanksgiving celebration occurred at the site of Plymouth Plantation in 1621. Since 1863, Thanksgiving has been observed annually in the United States. Abraham Lincoln declared the final Thursday in November to be Thanksgiving. But in 1939 President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared that Thanksgiving would be the fourth Thursday of November rather than the last. With the country still in the midst of the Great Depression, Roosevelt thought this would give merchants a longer period to sell goods before Christmas. At the time advertising goods for Christmas before Thanksgiving was considered inappropriate. There was much resistance to this change but in 1941 a bill was passed requiring that Thanksgiving be observed annually on the fourth Thursday of November.



But why this one day of the year? Surely we express our thanks to God and to others on a daily basis. God must have thought it a good idea because He instituted a celebration of thanksgiving called the Feast of Tabernacles or Ingathering. According to the NIV study Bible the purpose of this feast was to "celebrate the harvest and God's provision as they traveled from Egypt to Canaan." This far preceded any celebration by the Pilgrims or Presidential Proclamation. We too celebrate God's bounty and his provision as we travel from this temporary home to our eternal home in heaven.

Recently I read that the core of thankfulness is contentment. We rejoice because we have enough and even more than enough.

Praise God for his bountiful provision both physically and spiritually, in this life and for that which is to come.

In Psalm 63:7,8 we read, "My soul shall be satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you. Because you are my help I sing in the shadow of your wings."

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